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Children *of the* Lighthouse



CHARLES LINCOLN WHITE



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THE CHILDREN OF THE
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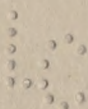
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BY
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Author of "Prince and Uncle Billy."

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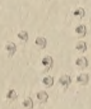


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A WORD OF GREETING

Many of us have often passed a lighthouse, sometimes in the daylight when it stood like a sturdy sentinel in bold, clear outline against the background of sky or land, sometimes at night when the lighthouse itself was not to be seen at all, but only the beautiful strong beam that flashed out into the darkness, piercing it for miles around. A few of us have visited a lighthouse, and followed the faithful keeper up the long, dark, winding stair to where the great lamp is kept always ready for use. We can never forget the fine view from the tower, nor the loneliness of it, and we cherish admiration for the brave people who are willing to spend summer and winter, year after year, through storm and sun, keeping the light.

In this story *all* of us may have the delightful opportunity of visiting and staying as long as we please with two children who live in a lighthouse far out from the shore, learning how the charms of nature crowd their days with pleasure, and discovering with them that "where there's a will there's a way" to find those whom we may help and encourage.

Perhaps we shall learn, too, that in the life of every boy and girl may be, as it were, a lighthouse in which the lamp of truth shall burn so brightly as to direct every one who sees it into paths of safety, and harbors of peace and joy. If we do learn that, then we shall every one of us be Children of the Lighthouse.

THE CHILDREN OF THE Lighthouse

I

LIFE AT THE LIGHTHOUSE



NOW be a good boy, Tom, and please sit down on this cushion and don't look at that ship any longer. You have been gazing at ships all your life. I have been writing again in my diary, and if you will turn around and listen, I'll read you a part of it."

As the good natured boy of ten years walked toward his sister, he said, "Ruth, there is a strange look about that ship on the horizon, that makes me want to watch it; but I will do as you say. Oh, Ruth," he continued, "you have one of those things on your face, that mother calls a frown. If writing in a diary will make me look like that, perhaps I shall often forget to do my part in keeping it with you."

"Tom!" cried his sister, with a merry laugh. "There! See! I have thrown that frown away. Listen! Didn't you hear it strike the water?"

Her brother ran to the edge of the high wall, looked

down, and shouted, "Yes, the frown has just gone down for the third time. I hope a shark will get it, so it can never climb up the wall again."

This made Ruth, his twin sister, laugh more merrily, as she said: "Oh, Tom, how happy we ought to be here in this dear old lighthouse! I am sorry for the boys and girls who have to live on the land, so far from the ocean. How many wonderful things we have here, that they can never see! The big light to shine all night, the silver moonlight on the ocean, and the stars that always seem so near the water. Yes, and we also have the little playground behind this high wall, and such wonderful views of the ships, the clouds, and the big storms, when the lightning strikes the water. And we mustn't forget our little school all by ourselves, and Mother as our teacher."

"Yes," added Tom, "very few children have their mother for a teacher and a school room in a lighthouse, with the waves under the windows singing all day long."

After her brother had said this, Ruth opened a little red book that lay in her lap, and began to read. Perhaps it was a strange way to begin, but this was what Tom heard:

"This is the first part of a diary Tom and I are to keep together, except when we forget to write in it. If I am too busy helping Mother or watching baby Paul, then Tom is to write that day. Tom is good to promise, but I expect I shall have to do nearly all the writing."

"Come, little Miss Ruth! Please stop!" cried Tom. "That isn't the way to keep a diary. You ought to write, 'It is a pleasant day. The wind blows hard. We had a good dinner. Ten ships passed and two flocks of wild geese. One steamer had a funny looking funnel. I didn't get a whipping, but Ruth deserved one.'"

"Be still, Tom," cried Ruth; "you will have your chance soon."

Then she began to read again:

"Tom and I were ten years old last Monday and we had a fine birthday party. We wrote letters to the whales and the porpoises and the sea gulls and tossed them out on the water. But our friends were too busy to come and get them. Father, Mother, baby Paul, Tom, and I were the only ones at the party.

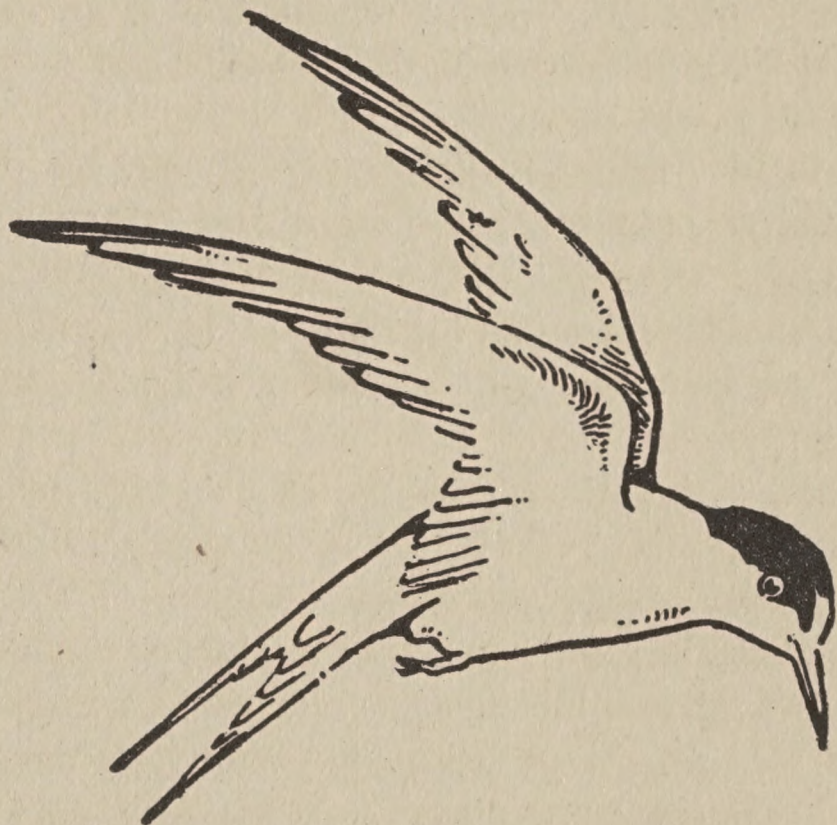
"We had a turkey dinner. Uncle Rufus sent the turkey with a large bag of cranberries and a box of brown eggs. The supply ship comes once in two weeks. It brings us our food and our letters; yes, and the clothes Mother orders by sending letters to a big store in New York.

"Tom and I are very happy here in the lighthouse. Last week we had a hard storm on the ocean. The waves were very large and seemed angry as they chased each other past our home. The spray hit the pane of glass in the window near my bed, and the sea pounded against the high stone wall all night, but Tom and I were not afraid. I wonder if the sea of Galilee had such a hard storm, when Jesus said, 'Peace! Be still!'

"Tom and I have been on the land only twice in our lives. We went both times to visit Uncle Rufus and Aunt Clara on their farm. When we went first we thought we had been there before we were born. But Aunt Clara laughed and said, 'No, my dears, but perhaps you have seen a picture of the house and the winding road leading up to it, and also the three waterfalls and the ponds near the barn.'

"Oh, what fun it was to watch the hens climb into the nests and then hear them cackle, and after that to find

the warm eggs beside the china one. Once, by mistake, we tried to boil the nest-egg and it exploded like a fire-cracker. But I would rather watch the sea gulls fly than see hens lay eggs. Tom and I know ten gulls by name. We were so glad to reach home again and smell the ocean and watch the birds flying around the lighthouse."



"Why, Ruth," exclaimed Tom, "you have not counted Old Baldy, the giant gull we saw four times last Sunday afternoon."

"Yes, that's so. We know by name eleven sea gulls. I will change it in the diary. It isn't fair to leave out Old Baldy. We must have this diary story true in each point too," said Ruth.

Then she began again and read:

"It was such fun when Uncle Rufus and Aunt Clara visited us last winter. They were so homesick for the old farm, and it made their eyes ache to look at the water,

and the sound of the waves kept them awake at night. The sound of the sea always makes *us* close our eyes. Mother says that when we were babies, she used to open the windows and let the waves and the sea gulls sing us to sleep.

“But two weeks later Aunt Clara cried when the boat came to take them away. She had to go with Uncle Rufus, because he was a teacher and he could not wait till the next boat came. He said if the boys had too long a vacation they might forget nearly all they had learned.

“I must go soon and rock Paul. He is nearly a year old, and is a darling. He was named for the Apostle Paul. I don’t believe that good man was a better baby than my little brother is. I wonder if he too was born in a lighthouse. Perhaps little Paul will become an apostle and a missionary also, when he grows up to be a big man. But I hope he won’t be an apostle, if that will keep him from being a lighthouse keeper.

“The Apostle Paul was shipwrecked once and was in the sea a night and all day. I pity people who are shipwrecked. In an awful storm last winter, we saw a big ship with one side broken open. It was drifting past our lighthouse. The sailors were up in the rigging holding to the ropes, but we could not help them. We wondered if they had any boys and girls at home. The next day it was pleasant again and our supply ship saved all the men. We talked with them when the Captain brought us our letters.

“It is wonderful to have a father who is a lighthouse keeper. My father is a great man and I am sure he has one of the largest lighthouses in the world. Sometimes when it storms he keeps awake all night watching the big lamp, to be sure it burns brightly every minute. If it

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should burn low or go out, some sailors might be lost or even a steamship full of men and women and boys and girls might strike the reefs near our home."

"Oh, Ruth, all this is fine. I could listen all day, and it is all true too. But what is there left for me to write?"

"There is plenty left for you, Tom. You have only to write what happens each day and I have only a little more to read."

Then she added: "Mother went through college and Father did, too. He was a pastor of a church on the land. Then he was very sick and came here to get well again. He loves to be a lighthouse keeper, but when Tom and I are grown up, he hopes he will be strong enough to be a minister again. I hope his new church will be near the college where we study.

"My mother speaks French and German, and Tom and I talk with her a little every day, in each of these languages. Tom likes German better than French, but I like French better than German, and we both like English best of all.

"I have a cat. Her name is John G. Whittier. Tom and I named her after the great poet. I am sure he would not care, for she has a poetical purr.

"I have a dog, too. We call him Bobby. We have also a canary bird, a typewriter, a baby telephone, a music box, a phonograph, a lovely home and dear parents and a baby brother. We also have the stars and the clouds, and sea gulls and porpoises around the lighthouse.

"Mother says we are rich even if we've not much money. I am afraid other girls ten years old do not have as much as I do. I weigh ninety-eight pounds, am forty-four inches tall and wear a number three shoe.

"Tom will write how tall he is and what he weighs, and about his shoes too, if he doesn't forget it. I have never been in a dentist's chair, and I never want to be there, even if it has a velvet cushion. I don't wear gloves or rubbers, and have never had an umbrella nor a sun-shade and don't want one.

"We never wear hats here at the lighthouse. Tom and I have not had the mumps or measles, or croup or chicken pox or earache or toothache, and we hope we never will have even one of them. We are both growing like seaweeds, Father says."

At that moment they heard a loud whistle and both children leaped to their feet to see where the sound came from. And there, a half mile from the lighthouse, they saw a great war-ship, and their father was answering the Captain's signals.

A moment later he called: "Children, the Captain of the war-ship is an old friend of Uncle Rufus, and is to make us a little visit. He will come in his launch. He was in the battle of Santiago and will surely tell us about the missions in Cuba. Captain Anderson is an earnest Christian and has been all over that beautiful island."

"Hurrah!" cried Tom. "What a happy day! See! The little boat is coming swiftly toward the lighthouse!"

II

CAPTAIN ANDERSON TALKS ABOUT CUBA



S they all stood watching the launch coming rapidly toward them, their father called to the children: "The Captain is a good man. His father was a missionary to the Indians and he knows many wonderful stories about the Red Men. I met him often, when I was a boy, and remember very well the day when he went away to study at Annapolis and learn to be a naval officer. He is one of the best Christian men in the Navy, and is very kind to all whom he meets. I have been told that his sailors and officers love him. But I have not seen him for many years. For a long time he has been in European waters. I wonder how he knew I was here at the light."

Nearer and nearer the boat came, and at last Captain Anderson shouted through a megaphone which he held to his mouth: "Hello, there! How do you do, Mr. Lighthouse Keeper? Watch out! If you don't, the Indians will get you."

Then he laughed and the children's father waved a salute and shouted: "I see you are the same old boy, Captain."

"Yes," came the answer, "and how are the children? How do you do, Ruth, Tom, Paul, and Mother?"

"How do you know our names?" cried Ruth.

"Oh, that is a secret," he answered, as he climbed up the iron ladder that reached from the water to the top of the wall. "I know all about you."

In a moment they had grasped his strong hand, and then, all talking at once, walked to the little room under the light. They had hardly seated themselves, when Captain Anderson leaped to his feet again, seized Tom and stood him on his head, then let him topple over on the floor. Before her brother knew what had happened, the big visitor swung Ruth around the room a dozen times and dropped her on the sofa, laughing. Then he held his hands out to Paul, who jumped in his eagerness to leave his mother's lap.

"Well," said their new friend, holding Paul in his arms, "these children must all call me Uncle Jack. I have long been hungry for a sight of boys and girls. I have three, but have not seen them for two years. I am just going home from Europe, where my ship has been visiting the ports of Italy, France, Spain, England, Holland, and Germany. Let me see! My twins must be nearly the same age as Tom and Ruth are. They were ten years old two weeks ago last Wednesday, and the baby will be four years old tomorrow. I wonder how many teeth he has."

"How strange!" cried the mother. "Our twins were born the same year and had their birthday party last Monday."

"Why," said the Captain, "that is wonderful, and we must have our children become acquainted. Richard and Clarissa are the twins. All the family live in Brooklyn,

New York, and this card tells the street and number of the house. They are great letter writers, and will be glad to correspond with Ruth and Tom."

After a long talk about the days when the visitor often met their father out in the Indian country, they all sat down at the dinner table, which Ruth and her mother had arranged. Before they began to eat, however, the lighthouse keeper asked Captain Anderson to pray for God's blessing on the food.

After dinner, they all went out on the long wall and sat in chairs that the children brought from the house.

"How long can you stay?" asked the lighthouse keeper. "Excuse me, please, for asking, but I am anxious that you should tell the children about Cuba and the missions there, before you go back to the ship."

"Oh, I can stay till sunset and that will let me sail into the harbor on the full tide soon after midnight. Yes, indeed, I shall be glad to tell the children about Cuba — at least all I know about it. I haven't been there for several years. I was one of the naval officers in the battle of Santiago, but that story is not what I must tell you today.

"Cuba was discovered," said Uncle Jack, "by Columbus on the 26th of October, 1492, and he took possession of it at Nuevitas on the northern coast. Columbus thought he had reached Asia, the land of riches. The great man soon went away to discover other lands, and not long after returned to Spain to tell about Cuba and all the other places he had seen.

"In 1508, the Spaniards found out that Cuba was only an island, for one of their ships sailed all around it, and came back to the place from which it started. That was a great surprise. Three years after Columbus went

away, a rich man, whose name was Velasquez, was sent by the son of Columbus to conquer and to make Cuba into a Spanish colony. He built a town and called it Baracoa, at the eastern end of the Island.

“The natives of this wonderful country were Indians. Cuba was divided into nine parts. These parts were called provinces, and each had one Indian chief to rule it. We do not know what their laws were, but they did not have wars with one another, or with the Indians of other islands. They loved peace and were timid. They liked to dance to their rude music. The best thing I know about them is that they were glad to receive the story of the Saviour, told to them by their Spanish conquerors, just as the Cubans now believe the Gospel the missionaries take to them. Of course all the Indians didn't believe what they said about God's love, and all the Cubans now do not accept as their own the salvation that Christ brought to the world.

“But the Spaniards were very cruel to the trustful Indians, and for four hundred years they did not stop abusing these poor people who lived on the Island. In 1518 the Spaniards built a large church at Baracoa, which was made a city that year. Havana, now the largest city on the Island, was founded in 1519, seven years after Baracoa was built. This was one hundred and one years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. In 1522, Santiago, another city, had grown to be so large that it became the capital instead of Baracoa. If you see where Nuevitas, Baracoa, Santiago, and Havana are, you will have four good points to mark on the map. You must learn to draw a map of Cuba and put each of these four cities down with a dot and a little circle around it, to show they were important places.

“Some of the Indians would not believe in the Christian religion, because the Spaniards, who said they loved God, were so cruel to them. One of these Indians was called Chief Hatuey. He fought long and hard to save his people, but Velasquez, the first Governor sent there by the son of Columbus, gave orders to have this great Indian burned alive in order to punish him for fighting the Spaniards. The brave man was told that he could go to heaven, if he would become a Christian. He at once asked if there would be any Spaniards in heaven. When he was told there would be many Spaniards in heaven, then the old chief Hatuey said, ‘I don’t want to go there.’

“In those early days and during the centuries since, there have been many wars, when the Cubans tried to be free. Twice the Spaniards were attacked in Cuba by the French and once by the English, who captured Havana. The Cubans many times fought hard battles to drive out the Spaniards. When they could not fight them in battle, they set fire to their houses and corn fields. One war lasted ten years, but each revolution failed until the final war of liberation, when the Cuban people became free.

“This war began in 1895. The people were suffering and thousands were starving because the Spanish soldiers were very cruel to them, and so on April 11, 1898, President McKinley asked Congress to try to stop the awful troubles. The war was soon ended, and a treaty of peace was signed in Paris on December 10, 1899. Cuba was then free.

“Our soldiers stayed on the Island for awhile and our government taught the Cuban people what freedom meant. They also taught them how to build good roads and bridges, and keep their cities clean, so that the people

would not have yellow fever and other dangerous diseases. The officers of the United States built good schools for the Cubans and enlarged the postal and telegraph systems. Better laws were also made and put into force. On May 20, 1902, the new Cuban government took control; and this day is called the 'Cuban Independence Day.' ”

“Is that the same as our Fourth of July?” asked Tom.

“Yes, just the same,” said Uncle Jack, and continued:

“A few years later the Cuban government was afraid there would be another revolution, and their President, in 1906, asked the United States to help Cuba again. Some wise men from the United States went to Cuba and gave its President and his friends good advice. On January 28, 1909, the Cuban people chose a new President, and since then, have governed themselves without many difficulties.

“There are many missionaries who preach the Gospel in Cuba. And there are schools and hospitals, too, on the Island. Four years ago I went to Havana, El Cristo, and Santiago, where there are wonderful schools.

“Oh, children, I will tell you what to do. Send a letter to my friend who lives near Santiago, and ask him to have some of the children in the mission schools write you letters. You can tell him that I asked you to do this. Be sure and promise to write a letter about the lighthouse, and send a little picture of it to each Cuban girl or boy who writes you a letter.

“My friend will tell the Cuban children what to write about. The Cuban boys and girls are very dear children. Many of them love and serve Christ, and they will write to you all about their homes and games and their schools.”

“Oh, what a fine plan!” cried Ruth.

"We will write the letter tomorrow," said Tom.

"Good," said Uncle Jack. "Do it," and he added, "Toward sunset, I will signal an officer to come and guard the lighthouse, and you all, yes, even the baby, must go with me to the ship and take dinner with me in my cabin. Then I will tell you a real Indian missionary story."

All through the afternoon they talked and laughed, and at last they were ready to make the trip across the water. The Captain's first officer had been signaled to come in another boat, and was now with them. Then they went away with Uncle Jack.

Soon the lighthouse seemed a long way off, and the war-ship grew very large as they came nearer. Suddenly Ruth said:

"Uncle Jack, you haven't told us yet how you knew we lived here, and how you knew our names too."

"I will tell you now," he answered. "Uncle Rufus wrote me your names, and yesterday I sent a wireless message to Washington, and a reply came in about an hour, telling me just where you lived. It happened to be in the direction I must sail in order to reach the land, so I kept a look-out for my new friends.

"But remember you and Tom are to send that letter to Cuba."

III

AN AFTERNOON ON A WAR-SHIP



VERY soon Uncle Jack and his friend were climbing up the brass covered stairs on the side of the big ship and were on its clean deck, where everything was strange to the children and their parents. The sailors saluted the Captain, and the visitors were at once introduced to several officers and felt very much at home.

While Tom and Ruth were looking at many strange things, the mascot of the ship bounded up to them. This was a large St. Bernard dog called Tiger, that soon was their firm friend. He came up with such a bound that he almost knocked Tom over, but at once the dog held up his right paw to shake hands, and he even stood up on his hind legs and then tried to shake hands with baby Paul.

While this was happening, the Captain asked a young officer to take Tom and Ruth around the ship, show them everything, and answer all their questions. In a few minutes the children found themselves down in the engine room with their guide, and then in the kitchens, and after that, they looked into the big guns and even put their hands on the wheel that steered the ship.

A half hour later, when their kind guide led them to the Captain's cabin, Uncle Jack asked if Tom and Ruth had been bashful about their questions. The children were silent and the officer said: "No, sir, they take the first prize for questions, and Ruth can beat Tom two to one. The only question I couldn't answer was, 'What do you do for Tiger if he is sea-sick?'"

This made the Captain laugh. "We should like to have the children's guide dine with us, and dinner is now ready in my cabin," he said.

The young officer had never eaten with the Captain before, and was very happy to have the chance to do so and especially with the children, with whom he had fallen in love. It was a delightful dinner party. Before they sat down, Captain Anderson asked the lighthouse keeper to ask God's blessing. After that the colored waiters served soup, fish, chicken, sweet potatoes, and many kinds of strange fruits and nuts that Tom and Ruth had never tasted. Last of all came the ice cream, which was the greatest treat and surprise of the whole day. The children could not understand how ice cream could be made on a war-ship.

When the dinner came to an end and the children had had three servings of ice cream, Uncle Jack walked to a shelf. "Here Tom, is a book called 'The American Indian on the New Trail!'" he said. "In this you will find many facts about the Indians. I would like to give this to you, if you will promise to read it and write me a good letter about the Indians, so that my children may hear it."

Tom was delighted with the book, and almost before he could say, "Thank you," Uncle Jack said: "And here is a little book called 'Goodbird, the Indian.' I want to

give it to you, Ruth, and I know you will enjoy it very much."

Ruth was very happy to receive the present, and thanked the Captain many times. Tom promised to read the book at once and to write the best letter he could to the giver. "But can't Richard and Clarissa write to us too?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Uncle Tom, "they will certainly write you a long letter about themselves and the little foreign boys and girls in Brooklyn, who go to their Sunday school and mission band. Richard and Clarissa will tell you all about the children in these poor homes, and these foreign boys and girls will also, I believe, write letters, and give them to my children to send to you."

"Hurrah!" shouted Tom. "That will be fine. We shall have letters then from Cuba and from the foreign children on the land."

"Yes," said the Captain, "you ought to write also to the missionaries in Mexico, Porto Rico, New Mexico, California, Colorado, Arizona, and other places where thousands of Mexican children live. You will get many wonderful letters from these children, and perhaps you can also get them from other mission schools. Your mother can tell you the names of the missionaries who teach in the schools among the mountain people, and among the colored people of the South. These children could write you good letters if they were asked to do so."

"Can we do this, Mother?" asked the children, with one voice, "and send them pictures of the lighthouse too?"

"We will try to do it," said their mother, "but how can we write so many letters, and where can we get all the pictures of the lighthouse, my children?"

"Oh, that is easy," cried Uncle Jack. "I have been looking around the cabin to see what presents I can give to the children, and I find two things that will help you to write the letters and make the pictures also. Here is a camera that I bought in Germany, and a box filled with everything you will need to make pictures. I want to give that to Tom as a present from Clarissa. And I have something else — a typewriter — and also a box with wax sheets and a little machine to make clear copies of all the letters. Oh, I have found one thing more — a big box of paper, and about two hundred envelopes. These are a present from Richard to Ruth."

"Oh, Uncle Jack, you are such a dear to give us so many things," said Ruth, as she danced for joy, around the room, with Tom almost standing on his head as he followed her; "Clarissa and Richard ought to have all these presents."

"No," answered the good man, "they will have a great many presents that are in a big trunk down in the ship."

"Oh, thank you a hundred times," shouted Tom.

"Yes, a thousand times," added Ruth.

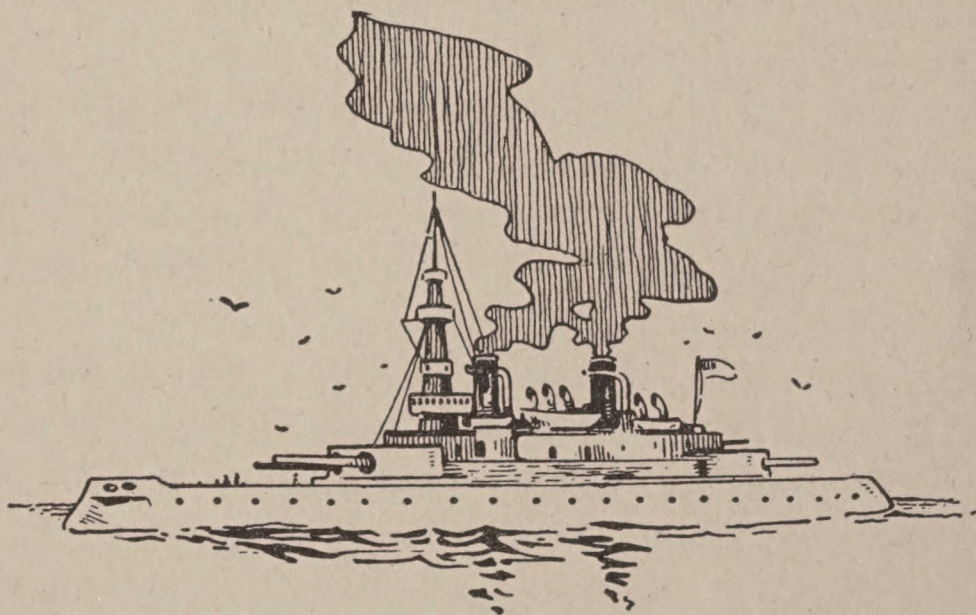
"It is too bad to have to leave such a lovely place," said the children's mother, "but I am sure it is now time to return to the lighthouse, because the sun will soon set, and Uncle Jack must be starting the big ship toward the shore."

A few minutes later, as they stood at the side of the ship, the Captain gave a signal and all the sailors ran up the rigging, stood up with joined hands, and gave three cheers for the visitors. This greatly excited Tom and Ruth, who had one more big surprise when the band began to play, "Nearer my God to Thee." This was followed by, "Let the Lower Lights be Burning," and after that,

as the men all removed their hats, the band played, "My Country 'Tis of Thee."

Then the Captain went home with his friends, and had several sailors go along to lift the bundles of presents out of the launch and carry them up the ladder to the lighthouse. When they all stood again on the wall, where the children sat when they saw the ship, they looked back upon a very pleasant afternoon.

The packages were carried into the house, and a few minutes after that, good-bys were said; soon they were



alone, and watching Uncle Jack hurrying back in the launch to the ship. A half hour later, they stood on the wall to see the war-ship start. When it sailed away, an officer waved two flags and the father read this message, repeating it to his family:

"Uncle Jack will expect that letter soon. Richard and Clarissa will surely write to Tom and Ruth. Perhaps they will all four go to the same college. Good-by, baby Paul and Mother and Father and Ruth and Tom and Bobby and all the pets and the dear old lighthouse! I will surely visit you again sometime, and perhaps before

another summer. We have had a happy time together, and must try to have many more such afternoons when Richard and Clarissa and our baby and their mother can all be with us. God be with you till we meet again."

Then the big whistle gave two long blasts, and the ship rapidly sailed away. The children watched it pass out of sight below the horizon. Soon their mother took Paul to bed, and their father lighted the big lamp as the sun dipped below the water.

"Oh, what a happy day we have had!" shouted Ruth, as she ran into the house, followed by Tom.

Of course the children were curious to see what was in the bundles, and even their mother said: "What can all these things be, do you suppose, children? We must untie the bundles very carefully so that nothing will be broken, and save the string. Roll it up very carefully, for we shall need it and the paper too, some day."

Soon the camera and the typewriter were standing on the table, and Tom and Ruth looked at them with open eyes. While they were peering into their new presents, their mother untied the other strange packages, and a moment later their father opened the box containing playthings for Paul. Then they found six books of foreign travel, and three French and three German books. In another bundle was a large box of chocolates made in Germany, marked, "From Uncle Jack." The last bundle was shaped like a big cage, and in it they were surprised to find a parrot. When they saw the red and yellow little creature, the children danced wildly and laughed, as it said: "How do you do, dear friends? Polly likes crackers. Do you?"

IV

WRITING TO NEW FRIENDS



HE next morning, Tom jumped out of bed when the clock was striking six, and a few moments later Ruth ran out to the end of the wall, where she and her brother often sat in the early morning. Tom was already reading the book

about the Indians which Uncle Jack gave him. When his sister reached their corner in the wall, he looked up and said: "Why, Ruth! I must go back at once to my room. I was in such a hurry to read this new book that I forgot to read my morning chapter in the Bible and to say my prayers."

"Why!" exclaimed Ruth, "I was so excited, I forgot too."

A few minutes later they had returned to their seats on the wall and Ruth was soon very busy writing in her diary. While her brother was reading, she looked up and said: "It is your turn to write in the diary today, Tom, but I am afraid that book will keep you from doing it. We have an hour before breakfast and then an hour after breakfast until school begins again. Our vacation of one week ends today, you know, but I fear Mother almost dreads to begin to teach us this morning."

Just then the door of the sitting room opened and their mother called: "Children, you can have another week of vacation and we will all work on the letters, get them written and the envelopes addressed, so that the supply ship one week from today can take them all away with it. Soon the letters will be hurrying in the mail bags to Porto Rico, Cuba, Mexico, and to all the other places. Are you willing to have a longer vacation?"

Tom and Ruth leaped to their feet dancing with joy. Then they ran to the lighthouse, kissed their mother and Tom answered: "Willing? Perhaps Ruth wants school this week, but I can get along without it, although you are the best teacher in the world, Mother."

Ruth stood there laughing too, and a few minutes later their mother went to get baby Paul who was crying, and sent the children back to their place on the wall. Then Ruth wrote in her diary:

"Captain Anderson is my newest Uncle. He asked Tom and me to call him Uncle Jack. The war-ship party and the presents were the best we have ever had. Meeting Uncle Jack makes me want to be a true Christian and to be a missionary to the Indians or to the Cubans or to the people somewhere, when I grow up to be a woman. We have a parrot now, that Uncle Jack gave us. Our new friend is very quiet this morning. Perhaps he is homesick for the war-ship. I am now going to write to Clarissa and Richard," and this was her letter.

Dear Richard and Clarissa:

Tom and I fell in love with your father and we call him "Uncle Jack." We want you to come and visit us at the lighthouse and your father says you may. Be sure and come so that you can be with us next Fourth of July and stay as long as you can. Last year we had

a great Fourth. Tom and I fired torpedoes and fire-crackers nearly all day. Early in the morning a tired sea-gull flew into a hole in the wall under the light and Father climbed down by holding to a rope and brought the bird up to us. One of its wings was badly hurt. Mother put it in a basket in a warm place near the kitchen stove, and we fed it little bits of meat and dried fish. Just before sunset the little visitor seemed so bright that we put the basket up on the wall, near the place where it came to us in the morning. We stood in the doorway and watched it. When it saw that it was alone, our little friend jumped out of the basket, walked along the wall and then sailed away over the water.

One very dark night a beautiful red-breasted bird flew against the lighthouse window. Mother said the little dear was going up north for the summer. It seemed to be dead, but it wasn't. It stayed in our basket nearly a week and was so tame that it would eat little pieces of a boiled egg out of our hands. When we let it go one morning it flew toward the north, just as though it knew the way.

I asked Father how such a little bird could go all alone across the ocean when it couldn't see the land. He told me, God gave every little bird an instinct. Mother thinks this is a kind of a voice in the bird's heart that whispers and tells it the way to go, just as He has given us the little voice of conscience in our souls to teach us what is right and what is wrong.

The sea is very blue today and I love to look at it. There is not a cloud in sight. Last Fourth of July was about a third as long as I wish it had been. I must now find the cat and the dog and get the parrot his breakfast and then go up to the light and visit Father. Tom and I read a chapter in the Bible with Mother every evening, then have our prayers and go to bed and dream of the day we were homesick when we visited Uncle Rufus and Aunt Clara.

Our beds are near the window and the sweet air blows through the room. I can look up at the stars and I love

to watch them twinkle as they seem to wink at me. I tried to count them last night but I was asleep before I reached fifteen.

The next thing I knew the sea-gulls were calling for their breakfast and Bobby was barking at the big ocean steamship that was sailing past the light. Then the cat jumped on the bed at my feet. I kept very quiet while it walked up slowly and put its paw on my cheek. It does this almost every morning. It raps with its claws on the window when it wants to come in, and it can open the door from the inside by standing up on its hind legs and pushing the latch down with its paw. I have never



seen a cat do this before. I am sure I have a prize cat.

I wish the glorious Fourth came oftener, and I pity the boys and girls that celebrate it on the hot and dusty land far away from the ocean.

On Sundays we have church at ten o'clock. First, we have sacred music on the phonograph and a solo "Jerusalem the Golden" or "Jesus Lover of my Soul" or some other beautiful hymn. Then Father reads a chapter in the Bible and prays. After that, Mother reads a poem and sings a solo, just before Father preaches a short sermon. Mother always plays on the piano that her college classmates gave to her and then the meeting ends.

I forgot to write that Tom always passes the collection box after we say the Lord's Prayer. We shake hands too, just as they do on shore in the churches, when Father says the benediction. I asked Mother two years ago if it was all right to bring in Bobby and the cat to the service. Since then they come to meeting every Sunday, and with Baby Paul and all of us we have a crowd, we think. Bobby sits in a chair but the cat almost always goes to sleep in her chair before the meeting ends.

In the afternoon we have Sunday school at three o'clock and Mother is our teacher. Father is the superintendent. After supper we always read a chapter from the Story of the Bible and look at the pictures, telling Mother what we see in them. We often also look at the faces in the old family albums and read the names on the front leaves of the big Bible and find the days those dear old people were born and when they died.

It is beautiful Sunday evenings when the sea is smooth and the wind is warm and the sea-gulls are flying around my window. We love to sit on the wall and see the big moon come up out of the ocean. We don't have to do any dusting in our home. Mother says a lighthouse is the cleanest place in the world.

At that moment Tom gave a shout and leaped to his feet as his sister cried: "Tom, Tom, are you crazy?"

He laughed, answering, "No, not a bit crazy, Ruth, but this Indian book is a very fine one, and the most exciting book I ever read. I will have to let out a war-whoop once in a while, or the buttons on my coat will snap off and that will make more work for you or Mother. I want to read every page and every word and finish it as soon as possible, because I must write Uncle Jack that letter about the Indians."

"Yes, of course, you must keep your promise to Uncle Jack, but we have to write that letter to the mission children, now."

It was a very busy day for the children of the lighthouse. Tom read his new book and Ruth, with her mother's help, wrote the letter which must be copied and sent to so many places. The parrot soon began to talk again and made them laugh when he said: "Bobby, you are a naughty dog, a very bad dog. Have a bone, Tiger?"

"O," said Ruth, "that is what he used to cry on the ship. Tiger was the name of that big dog. Bobby has two names now." But Bobby did not care, and ran off to sleep in his big box down near the playground behind the wall.

The next morning Tom wrote this letter to Captain Anderson:

Dear Uncle Jack:

It seems strange to have another Uncle, but Ruth and I love you. The Indian book is the best one I own and I want to thank you again for it. I have read it carefully. Nearly all day yesterday it was in my hands. I find many wonderful stories and new things in it which I'll write about next time.

Please tell Richard and Clarissa that we very much want them to visit us here at the lighthouse next summer. We hope you can come with them and bring all the family too. We have a big tent that we sometimes pitch on the playground. Richard and I can sleep there. Perhaps you think our lighthouse is a little one, but there are many rooms in it and more than you know about.

Please ask the children to write soon and give them our love. Please have the little missionary children also write to us. Perhaps Richard and Clarissa can send these letters when they write to us. We can hardly wait to hear from them and from the mission children. This letter can't go away in the supply ship until five days from now.

The presents were wonderful. Mother and Father are very much pleased with their books. The typewriter is a beauty. The chocolate was the sweetest we have ever had. The parrot is fine and talks like a wise bird, Mother says. All your presents have made us very happy. Ruth, Mother, Father, Paul, send their love to you. The candy is almost all eaten. The parrot calls our dog Tiger. We all say that the day you were here was the happiest one we have ever had at the lighthouse.

Your loving friend,

TOM.

After dinner they all sat on the wall and Ruth read to the family the letter that she and her mother had written to be sent to the mission children. Ruth had done nearly all of it, but her mother told her how to change some of the sentences.

The cat and Bobby seemed to know that something wonderful was happening, and many times they put their paws on the paper near the typewriter, while the parrot called loudly from the open window. It was a beautiful day, and great white clouds were floating over the ocean. Even Paul listened while Ruth read the letter:

At the Lighthouse.

Dear Friends:

We have formed a Mission Band at our lighthouse. We live very far out in the ocean and cannot see the shore, but we love to live here with the water all around our home.

We would so like to have you come and speak at our mission band and join it too. If you will write us a letter we will make you an absent member or an honorary member, as father says. There are only two children in our band now, Tom and I, but we have never had any one absent. Tom is the president of the mission band and I am the secretary and treasurer. We have

two dollars and eight cents in our mission box. If you will send us a letter in care of the lighthouse department, Washington, D. C., I'm sure we'll get it. We hope to learn what kind of a house you live in and what your games are.

Do you go to a day school and to a Sunday school also, and do you have a Junior band? Of course you love the Lord and are trying to serve Him just as we are, out here in the lighthouse. We hope that you always keep your Christian lamp well trimmed and burning brightly. Father says the government inspector may come any day and any hour, and so he must always keep the lighthouse lamp in perfect condition. He says too, that we never know when our Lord may come also to see if our lamps are clean and are giving a good light.

If you can't read English, Mother says your missionary will gladly read this letter to you, and write to us, for you, in English.

It seems very wonderful that so many boys and girls in a great many places love the same Saviour, pray every day in His name, and read the same Bible. Tom and I have loved the Lord ever since we can remember, but last Easter after our Sunday morning service, we both felt that we ought to serve Him better. We gave our lives to Christ again that day, and asked Him to forgive us for all of our sins. It was something in the sermon that made us both feel the same way. Father and Mother prayed that morning in the service and then we prayed too. It is hard to explain just what happened, but we can only say that from that Easter morning we have been trying harder than we did before to do everything that we can to please the Lord. We want to grow up and get others to love Him also.

Mother and I send some money each year to the "Woman's Missionary Society" and we all divide the rest of our gifts on Sunday among the other societies. Tom and I have twenty cents a week to spend as we wish. We give one tenth of it each Sunday, and Father and Mother give one tenth of all the money they receive from

the Government. After they have given a tenth they sometimes give more. They call this a free will offering and they say that a tenth belongs to God first of all. We do not chew gum and there are no stores here to get our pennies. We often wonder if soda tastes good.

Mother says that prayer is our speaking to God, and when we read the Bible then God is speaking to us. This is too long a letter, Father says, but please remember your letters can't be too long to suit us. Will you write soon and tell us of yourselves? Then we will vote you into our Mission Band at the next meeting after your letter reaches the lighthouse. We have a meeting once in three weeks, at two o'clock on Saturday afternoons.

Your true friends,

TOM and RUTH DODGE.

Several days later when the supply ship came it took away the largest number of letters that the Captain had ever seen. He brought the lighthouse family a letter from Uncle Rufus and one from Aunt Clara. They received also four boxes of provisions. The following morning school began again and the next two weeks flew by quickly. The morning before the supply ship came again, Ruth wrote in her diary:

"Tom hasn't begun to write in this little book; he is reading for the fourth time the book about the Indians, and I haven't written one word in my diary for four days.

"Tom and I can hardly wait for the letters to come from the mission children and from Richard and Clarissa, but Mother says we must be patient."

When she had finished this, Tom called out from the open window: "Ruth! Ruth! Down near the wall in front of you a big shark is sleeping—I can see his fins above the water, and some porpoises are playing not far

away also. Look quickly! There are a lot of flying fish passing the end of the wall, and Old Baldy, the big sea-gull, is coming toward us. He has been away a long time."



V

MORE ABOUT CUBA



THE next Saturday afternoon was a very pleasant day, and at the usual hour the Lighthouse Mission Band had its regular meeting. After Ruth had read the records they sang, "Let the Lower Lights be Burning," and then another hymn, which was Tom's favorite, "Throw Out The Life Line." Tom always sang the verses of this alone, and Ruth and her mother joined in the chorus. Their mother read aloud the thirteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and explained how St. Paul and Barnabas began their first great missionary journey.

Not far away from the place on the wall where they were sitting, Bobby and the cat that they had just renamed Betsey, were sitting and looking out to sea. These pets often sat on the wall and gazed at the waves. Betsey was very fond of watching the clouds sail by, and Bobby had a funny way of barking as soon as he saw a ship lift its head above the horizon. It seemed as if he wanted to say: "Look! Look! Look! I see a sail and I hope it will come this way." That morning very early he heard a dog barking on a ship that passed near the light, and he became so excited that it was a long time before

he stopped whining. He had not seen a dog since he was a puppy and came from Uncle Rufus' farm.

All during the hour of the Mission Band meeting, the waves were breaking gently against the high wall and seemed to be singing a little song of their own. After their mother finished the reading of the chapter and had told the children the story of the first missionary journey, she said:

"This afternoon we will have the wonderful story of the Island of Cuba. I have been reading a very interesting book that tells all about it. It was written by Dr. Grose and published a few years ago by the Woman's Home Mission Societies. When I have told you the story, I think each of you had better read the part of the book that I will mark."

In the afternoon as they sat on the wall, she related this story:

"The Cubans are people whose parents were born in Spain. Many other people live on the island, such as Chinese, Negroes and some Americans. In 1907 there were, according to the government census, 1,240,000 Cubans, but the other people numbered nearly 800,000 more. Of this last group about 200,000 were whites, and all but a few thousand of these were born in Spain. Of the rest a few more than 6,700 were born in the United States. There were also about 335,000 of mixed blood and 275,000 pure Negroes. There were nearly 12,000 Chinese and all of these men and boys, except 196.

"There are about as many people in Cuba as there are in California or in the three states of Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. The island is about as large as Kentucky. The Spaniards own nearly all of the stores, manage the banks and almost all of the factories.

They live in Cuba to make money, but very many of them return to Spain when they have become rich, and don't like to become citizens of the new republic. Many poor young men come each year from Spain, because in Cuba there is a good chance for them to rise in business.

"The Negroes and the mixed people not only work in the mills, but are blacksmiths, farmers, and carpenters; in the sugar fields and coffee plantations, they are side by side with the white people, and receive the same wages for they are just as skilful.

"The Cuban women have to work hard, and very little chance is given them to get a good education. They begin to toil early in life and have but few of its comforts, and are generally married when very young. If they can afford to do so, they have servants instead of doing the work themselves, for they are ashamed to work if they have money to hire some one else to do it for them.

"The men feel the same way also and the people are ashamed to carry even a little package in the street. When they buy anything at a store they ask to have it sent to their homes. The women sew a little; very few of them sew well, but they are fond of crocheting. More than half of them have never learned to read, and most of them care little about it.

"In the cities, the people nearly all live in low houses of one story, but some of them have fine houses and high ones. In the tiny balconies of some, the women sit and watch the people passing by. They generally have a big front room which is used as a parlor, and behind this is another room that often opens into a garden or a little court called the patio. On one side of this the house becomes narrow and there is a line of several rooms. These are used for sleeping and one of them, sometimes two,

for a kitchen and work room. Flowers and fruit trees often grow in the patio and very many of the patios have a fountain.

“There are no windows to the houses but iron rods are fastened to the sides; through these people often look as they go by on the sidewalks. The Cuban people do not consider this impolite. Some of the iron rods are covered with beautiful curtains and bright colors are seen everywhere, especially in clothes, and the painting of rooms and houses. The roofs are often covered with green or red tiles, and the floors have another kind of tile with pretty figures and colors.

“In the cities the people are often very poor, and sometimes the children wear little clothing or none at all, while in the country, even on the colder days they play around the house and on the sidewalks and in the fields without being troubled with *any* clothes.

“If horses are kept, the stable is at the lower end of the patio, and often the only way for the horse and carriage to reach it, is by passing through the front room or at one side of it. If there is no connection with the sewer, a cesspool is dug in the center of the patio, and this often brings sickness to the people.

“The furniture is either cane-seated or made of wood. There are no stuffed sofas or chairs with cloth coverings or anything soft such as we have in our home. Insects and vermin in Cuba would hide away in such places. There are not many books and only a few pictures on the walls of the houses. In a one-room shack or hut, the floor is made of dirt. In the corner you will find a bundle of rags, and the only furniture is a rude chair, a bench or two, and perhaps a box for a table. One of these houses, I am told, is made of barrel staves and covered

on the roof with pieces of tin made from tin cans that come from the United States. Most of the roofs on the poor houses, however, are covered with the leaves of palm trees.

“This kind of a house has a yard outside, and in it there is an oven where all the cooking for the family is done. Many of the children have never seen a table set in the right way. On the table of a poor one-room house there is a soup pot that contains the vegetable stew, into which all the people dip when they want to fill their dish again. Washing dishes in Cuba is often forgotten and there is very little washing of any kind among the poor and ignorant. Such people wear simple clothing, and the same suit or dress has to last a long time, but they are contented and seem to be very happy. Many of them do not like to work even when they know they must, in order to buy food. They are very fond of eating meat, but this costs so much money that most of the people have to be contented with vegetables and fruit.

“The children like to eat sugar cane and this takes the place of the stick candy that you sometimes have. The Cuban boys and girls also like to slide down hill but they cannot do this on sleds, so they slide over the wet grass on a big palm tree leaf.

“They are very fond of playing with *coucuers*, a black bug with two bright places in its head; these are very bright like two little electric lights. When this bug flies it has the power also to shed light under its wings so that it seems to be like a little shooting star flying from tree to tree. These bugs are very plentiful in the sugar cane fields and the children hunt for them and put them in glass jars. When they shake the jars the *coucuers* shine brightly. In Jamaica, I have been told they put a lot of

these funny bugs into the electric light lamps on the automobiles and use them instead of oil, or electricity. A missionary told me that one evening he saw an old Cuban woman sitting before her house, reading a paper, and the only light she had was that from a big black lightning bug. When she could not see to read clearly, she squeezed it and the bug burned more brightly.

"The boys and girls of Cuba have very few games in the home, and in some of these the children gamble. When they see their parents buying lottery tickets, of course it seems right for them to have a little lottery of their own. Perhaps they have only a few marbles or nuts to gamble with, but this is just as bad as to have silver or gold. A large part of their game is simply shouting and talking.

"The Cuban people are greatly in need of learning the simple truth of the Gospel. The Roman Catholic Church has been on the Island for more than four hundred years, but the people know very little about the salvation that Christ came to bring to the world. The church in which they were brought up did not raise its voice for freedom all during the years when Spain was so cruel. It has not spoken against the lottery and some other evil things which the people like to do.

"There were only a very few schools which the poor boys and girls could attend, until Cuba obtained her freedom. The people still live in spiritual darkness unless they believe the Gospel which the missionaries preach. It is possible to believe in the freedom that the new republic brings without having real freedom from sin in the heart.

"As soon as the war of liberation ended, and the Spanish soldiers were defeated, religious liberty was

promised to the people on January 1, 1899. Before that day it was against the law that the Spaniards made, for any one but the priests to preach to the poor people of the Island. But the Christians in the United States sent missionaries to Cuba very soon. The people were glad to have the missionaries come, because they were Americans. They were glad also to hear the new story of the love of God and eager to join the churches at once. Often they wanted to do this before they understood what it meant to live a Christian life.

“After a few months the ignorant country people and many others who lived in cities were told that the new missionaries had come to Cuba not to preach the Gospel but only to make Cuba a part of the United States. This made it very hard for their new friends to help the Cubans to be Christians, but at last they found that they were deceived by those who tried to make them hate the American missionaries. They saw also how kind and patient their new religious guides were and they knew that only good men and women would work so hard to teach them to follow the Saviour.

“Cuba is a hard mission field, because when the missionaries first began to preach there only one-fifth of the people could read. This made it almost impossible to explain to them the truths of the Bible which they could not read for themselves. The Cuban people like to gamble and go to cock-fights on Sundays, and do many other very wrong things on that day. Many of them do not see why cock-fighting and gambling and telling lies are wrong.

“The mission day schools were much needed and have done a great deal of good work. The boys and girls love to attend them and their fathers and mothers are anxious

to have these schools open in their villages. The Cuban children are quick to learn. They have wonderful imagination, a fine memory, and are good readers. The Christian missionaries, who are their teachers, are very kind, but very strict. The children are taught to obey, because they must learn to obey their teachers, if they are to learn to obey the Lord. In many of the little towns and villages a school of thirty children can be opened, and the



parents are willing to pay \$2 a month for each child. Some of these schools have very bright boys and girls who afterwards go to higher schools. There are several large high schools or institutes in Cuba, and they are crowded with young people. Here are trained the young men and women who will become the Christian leaders of the churches.

“In many little towns the churches, built by our mis-

sionaries, are the only places where the people ever hear the story of Jesus and His love. In some of them the children have their school rooms also. Often, however, the school is in a hall not far from the church."

VI

LETTERS FROM THE PALM TREE LAND



THREE weeks later, about an hour before it was time to have the next meeting of the Lighthouse Mission Band, the supply ship came, bringing a big envelope from Cuba. The children wanted to open it at once and read the letters from the Cuban boys and girls, but their mother asked them to wait until the supply ship went away, just before the clock struck two, when it was time for their meeting to begin.

Let us look over Ruth's shoulder and read the letters from Cuba. Tom was much excited, but he said: "Ruth must read the letters today and I will read those that come for some other meeting."

This is what they found in the letters.

Dear Lighthouse Friends:

I am eleven years old and my hair is black and long. My mother curls it every day on a little bamboo stick. I am an Indian. There are very few of our people left in Cuba. Once the Indians owned this wonderful land, but the white man came long ago and was very cruel to our people. I live in a little house covered with big leaves. These are so thick that the rain cannot come in. I love to hear it rain. Sometimes it pours so hard that I can see only a little way from the house. The hens and the pigs all run into the house when it rains hard.

We have a pet pig called Dinco. He knows how to do many tricks. My father found him out in the sugar cane. He was so weak he could hardly squeal. We suppose a dog had killed his mother. When Father brought him home we fed him out of a little spoon and he squealed hard and did not want to eat. Soon he learned to drink milk.

I go to a mission school now, and I can hardly wait for the time to come each day when school begins. I love the teacher. Her home is in the United States, but she comes to Cuba to teach because she loves Jesus. I love Him too.

Your friend,

Dear Children in the Ocean:

I live in the mountains of Cuba. I can see the ocean too from the top of the mountain. It is a climb of two hours from my home. My father works in a coffee plantation. When the coffee trees blossom, they are very beautiful. At last the berries grow large and full and they are picked. The drying is done on a big flat place. They try to keep the berries from getting wet. Often the showers come very quickly.

I have four sisters and we all go to the primary mission school. Our teacher lives in Cuba, because she wants all the Cuban boys and girls to love her Saviour. We learn verses in the Bible every day. The school is opened each morning with reading the Bible and prayer. I learned the Lord's Prayer the first week and I say it now every day and my mother also says it every night before she goes to bed. I taught it to her.

The teacher has taught my mother how to sew better and how to make good bread and how to bake beans too. I wonder what ice cream tastes like! We love to have the teacher come to our home. Father says she has made his five girls all over into new girls. The missionary told him it was the Saviour who had done it. He said, he believed she was right.

My father wants all his girls to become Christians. Last night after the Sunday service, he told the minister he wished to follow Christ very soon. I hope he will follow Him. Mother says she has been a Christian two months. Yesterday I came home from school early and found her kneeling down by her table. She was praying. All the rest of the day, she was singing and her face had a smile. My father calls her his angel, since she became a Christian.

Your mountain friend.

Havana, Cuba.

Dear Sea Children:

I go to a mission school in Havana. We have a big city with many streets in it. My father keeps a store. He used to keep his store open on Sundays, but a few months ago he gave his heart to the Lord. At once he closed his store on Sundays and went to all the services. He used to swear, but now he is very careful of his language. His friends told him that his family would starve if he closed his store one day in each week. But Father says he has more people who buy in his store now and that he makes more money than he used to make when he kept open on Sunday.

We all go to the mission church now and to the mission school too. Father says we must go to the mission school to study the Bible every day. But I must tell you why he went to the mission the first time. It was because a missionary asked him one day if he loved the Lord. It was a strange question and Father said he didn't know. He of course wanted to be polite to his customer. The next day he heard the stranger preach, and fell in love with Jesus.

Nearly all my girl friends pray every day and are trying to serve the Lord as well as they can. Please pray for us in the school.

Your far-away friend.

Santiago, Cuba.

Dear Friends:

I live in the city of Santiago. One Sunday morning a woman with twenty-five boys and girls passed our house. We had just moved into a new part of the city. I wondered where those children were all going. The next Sunday, when I saw them coming down the street, I followed them till they went into a church. It was called a Protestant church, and I went in with the children. The singing was lovely and I heard a man pray for the first time in my life. I also was told the story of Jesus, and now I know why He came down from Heaven and died on the cross. It is because we need a Saviour and He loves us.

I once was very sick and I went to a hospital; I was cared for very lovingly by a Christian nurse and by a very kind doctor.

Your loving friend.

Cristo, Cuba.

Dear Lighthouse Friends:

I am a pupil in the school at Cristo. Our building is filled with boys, and across the road there is another building where the girls live. Our chapel service comes early each morning, and all the boys and girls attend it. We always enjoy having visitors come from the United States, and they tell us many very interesting things. The people who gave so much money to build this school are very much interested in the pupils who attend it. We hope we shall not disappoint them, and we want to be Christian leaders in our churches.

One day one of the speakers told us that we did not have to wait to be good Christians till we went away from the school. He showed us how we could be good Christians right here in the school, and learn to be leaders now.

Early in the morning, before breakfast, the girls go to walk with a teacher, and the boys are taught to march

by another teacher. Our teacher is very strict, and all the teachers are that way in our school. The girls learn to sew, and the boys are taught to do many useful things. We keep our rooms very clean, and make our beds in the newest and best way. Inspection hour is a hard testing time.

We have a very happy life here. Often our parents come to see us, and they are always pleased with the school. I don't like to think of the day when I shall leave this wonderful place, but of course I shall have to do so in a little while. Then I hope to be a missionary and preach in Baracoa or somewhere in that district. Many people have become Christians. It is very mountainous there.

Your true friend.

La Maya, Cuba.

Dear Far Away Friends:

I hope this finds you well and in the company of your family. I am well.

Our school is very good and the desks are new. I like the teachers and brought them a bunch of bananas as tall as a man.

The things I like to do best are swimming, running, baseball, shooting, and horse-back riding. I have a very fine black horse.

My father owns a large coffee plantation.

I live in the country and go to the farm every Friday after school. I have a white American hen, but my rooster died.

Come to La Maya on Christmas day for we are going to have a fine program and I'm to take part in it.

Your friend.

Camaguey, Cuba.

Dear Friends in the Sea:

I go to school every day as soon as we have our breakfast. I like the school and I like my lesson books,

but I like my Bible best. Every day when I return from school at midday, as soon as I have finished doing whatever Mother has for me to do, I get my Bible and read. In the evening after school I have to prepare my lessons for the next day.

I wish you could see our plants and flowers. I love to water them and watch them grow. I go to the Sunday school at the church. In the Sunday school they teach us that Jesus shed His blood to save us. I love Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and I am glad because he takes me to be His little lamb. I pray to Him all the time, that He will keep me safe every day. I hope you love Jesus too. If you do, He will forgive your sins and lead you in the right way.

Your little friend who thinks of you and loves you.

Camaguey, Cuba.

Dear Brother and Sister :

I am writing this to tell you about our Christmas entertainment. I am happy because I am to have a part in it, and I wish you were here to enjoy it with me.

Our Sunday school is growing all the time, and there is much enthusiasm in Bible study. I love my Bible and would like to have much time to read it. I do read some every morning the first thing when I get up. I wish I could tell you how happy I was the day I joined the church. It was the happiest day of my life.

I hope you can come soon, and visit us. I want you to see our flowers. We have such lovely dahlias and chrysanthemums and many others. But I like roses best of all; they are so sweet.

Mamma and Papa have adopted a little baby boy, and we think a lot of him. He is a little orphan.

Your friend.

Camaguey, Cuba.

My dear little friends:

I am sure you will be glad to hear something about our home. Our house is very small but it is comfortable, and we have nice flowers in the yard. My brothers and sisters are all smaller than I am. They are too small to go out alone.

I do not always stay at home, because my grandmother likes to have me stay with her sometimes. She does not live very near to our house. I go to school every day. After school a little friend and I sweep and dust the school room, and in this way we pay for our tuition. I like to go to school because I want to learn many useful things, such as sewing, cooking and music. I like all my books, but most of all I like to study English, and I hope I shall learn to speak it well.

I go to Sunday school every Sunday, and every day I read my Bible. I love to read the Bible, because in the Bible we learn what we ought to do. I am a member of the church and I go to nearly all the services. In our church we shall have a Christmas celebration.

Lovingly your friend,



VII

NEWS FROM A BIG CITY



HEN Ruth finished the last letter, her brother said: "Aren't those wonderful! It is almost like going to Cuba and going to one of the mission schools to have so many letters. But I am glad I live in the lighthouse. I some-

times wonder if any of our sea-gulls fly so far away as this beautiful island."

At that moment, Tom's father called to him, and as he ran away he shouted to Ruth: "Do you suppose the letters from Porto Rico and other places will be as good as the Cuban ones?"

Three weeks from that afternoon, at the next meeting of the Band, they had a bundle of letters from the Big City where Richard and Clarissa lived with their father and mother. There were several letters from children of the Mission Band and these were read by Tom. Once he talked so loudly that Ruth said: "Are you trying to make the sharks and the flying fish and the sea-gulls understand?"

Here are the letters that he read:

Dear Tom and Ruth:

Father has told us all about the lighthouse and you all. What a fine home you have! Of course you can't

play tennis or basket-ball or baseball or go skating or sliding, but we would give up all these things if we could only fish all the time and watch the ships sail by. We have never seen the ocean in a big storm.

We meant to write you before, but we went on a long ride with Father in our touring car, to see Grandmother, who lives near Cleveland. We reached home again yesterday and found your fine letter. Father also was glad to see Tom's letter on his desk. Father says you write a good letter and he gives you a mark of A plus on it. That is the highest mark we can get in our school. He never marks our letters more than B plus.

Father and Mother say we can visit you next summer and stay two weeks. We hope the supply ship will forget to come for a whole month and then we can have a longer visit.

We have a Junior Mission Band, that meets every Friday afternoon after school. We are studying about Good Bird, the Indian. One day Rev. Henry Roe Cloud, a real Indian and a noble Christian, told us about the need of having Indian boys and girls educated to be leaders of his people. We have a wonderful man here in our church. He was once an orphan boy and went to live with a man on his farm. He was born in New York and had forgotten what he was taught about Christ. His father and mother are Italians. The man who gave him a home was a Christian, and of course was good to him. The boy worked in the garden and did errands, and carried milk to families in the village. He was also very smart in his studies in school and liked to read good books. After studying hard, he went to college, and now he is the head-master in a school which trains missionaries to work among the Italians.

In our Mission Band, we have a little Hungarian girl. Her father is dead and her mother was afraid to have her come to our meetings. One day our missionary took her picture while she was playing. The next day he gave her one. She had never had a picture of herself before,

and she and her mother were very pleased with it. Soon after that she met the missionary and asked if he would take her mother's picture too. He went to her house, asked her mother to stand in front of the camera, and soon the mother, too, had her own picture.

The missionary then called often and told them about Christ's love for them. Now they love the Saviour too, and have been received as members of our church. The little girl often sings to us in the Hungarian language.

In our Band we have a little boy we call Sammy. He was hurt in the street two years ago and he has to sit in a wheel-chair all day. The doctor says he can never walk again. He is a poor boy and loves to come to the Mission Band and to the Bible school. All are very kind to him. He suffers much pain but he almost always has a smile on his poor, pale face. All the boys and girls love Sammy very much.

The Bible games we play at our Mission Band are great. We run a race to see who can find a verse in the Bible first. To do this quickly we learned all the books in the Bible backward and forward. We can say them very fast each way.

Another game is to have the leader open the Gospels, read a familiar verse and then see who knows where it is. Nearly all of us can now guess right on more than a hundred verses. The third game we play each Friday is to finish the last half of a verse, after the leader reads the first half of it. I suppose you both know that you can read the Bible through in a year if you read three chapters each day and five on each Sunday. We are sending in this big envelope a few letters from some boys and girls in our Band.

Please write again soon and send us some of those letters the Cuban and Porto Rican children send to you. Perhaps we four will go to the same college when we grow up.

Your loving friends,

RICHARD and CLARISSA.

Dear Friends:

Richard and Clarissa asked me to write to you. I see them every Friday at the Mission Band. I earn money for the mite box by selling papers. My father drives a milk wagon and gets up at two o'clock in the morning. I almost never see him, for he sleeps in the day.

I was asked to go to the Band and went one day. Soon after that, a missionary called and talked with my mother.

Now my four brothers and sisters go to church each Sunday and my mother and father go when they can. They are all Christians now. Last Easter our whole family of seven joined our church. It all happened because I was asked to go to the Band.

We all go to school and Father says he is going to have us stay in school as long as he can keep us there. Fred says he is going to be a minister and Arthur hopes to be a doctor. I am going to be a missionary to Cuba when I grow up. Jennie and Hattie say they are to be teachers.

Mother says if we will be good Christians that is all she will ask. We have a motto over our sitting room looking-glass. It reads, "God Bless our Home." Father brought it home the day before Easter.

I am glad to write this letter and I hope you are well at the big lighthouse.

Your loving friend,

EDGAR.

Dear Friends:

I have never seen a sea-gull, or a lighthouse, or a ship, or an ocean, but I see a fire engine every day and often run after it when there is a fire. I am trying to love Jesus, but some days bad words go out of my mouth and I have bad thoughts in my heart. It is hard not to feel so when Peter Ducco, who lives in the alley, throws a stone at my sister. He laughs at me because I go to the Mission Band every Friday and to church each Sunday.

Father is sick and coughs hard. Mother works out all day. My oldest sister Maria is a little mother to us and

is a good cook. We all try to keep the house and the yard clean. The missionary calls and reads to Father nearly every week. We love her.

In the summer nearly every Saturday, we all go up in the park and play tag.

Your true friend,

ANDREW.

Dear Sea-Children:

I had six brothers and sisters, but only three are living now. Tony was bitten by a rat one night and it poisoned him and he died. Danto was run over by an ice team and only lived a week. Tina fell into the canal and was drowned. When she died a missionary came to our house and we have been going to her church ever since. She is a kind woman. Mother says, she is an angel.

The Friday Mission Band and the Bible school are great. Nearly all the Band and our Bible school children go to church too. I like to go to church. I know every word. I think I am going to be a minister. Mother says, perhaps the Lord may let me be one, if I am a good Christian. That is what I am trying to be. I suppose you are good kids too.

Yours truly,

ANTONIO.

VIII

A SURPRISE FROM PORTO RICO



FEW days later the supply ship came again and the children were disappointed because it brought them no missionary letters, but their mother received a long envelope with the postmark of Boston. It said that her college classmate, Miss Henderson, a Porto Rican missionary, would come to visit at the lighthouse as soon as she could leave her friends on the shore. Perhaps this would be when the ship went to them the next time. She asked the children's mother to write by return mail if she could come.

Of course the Captain took the invitation away with him, and promised to drop the letter in the post office himself just as soon as he reached the land. Tom's mother let him add these words as a postscript: "Please be sure and come, Miss Henderson, by the next boat. We are studying about Missions and we want to learn all we can about Porto Rico and the children in that island."

Two weeks later when the ship returned it reached the lighthouse just before supper time. The children's mother had seen it coming and had set an extra plate for her friend, hoping that she had come. There was

great excitement when Miss Henderson, who hid behind the pilot house for a few minutes, at last climbed up the ladder and was welcomed by them all.

Soon it seemed as if they had always known her. Bobby jumped up with delight, Betsey rubbed against her long gray dress and even the parrot was excited and shouted, "Good evening. Glad you came. Sit down and stay awhile. Naughty dog, Tiger." This pleased the visitor very much and it was easy to see that she had fallen in love with Tom and Ruth and Paul.

While every one was talking at once and saying how glad they were to see her, their mother said: "Be quiet, children, I know Miss Henderson is too tired tonight to talk about Porto Rico and after supper you may all go to bed early and your father and Miss Henderson and I will talk this evening about our old school friends."

Soon after that the children were asleep. Then the hours flew past while Mrs. Dodge and her husband sat and talked with their guest.

The next morning after prayers in the big lighthouse room, Miss Henderson said: "Now children, shall we have a talk about Porto Rico?"

"The Island was discovered by Christopher Columbus on November 16, 1493, during his second voyage across the Atlantic. A monument to this great man now stands near Aguadilla at the western end of the Island. A spring there is called Columbus Spring. Porto Rico is about 1,400 miles southeast from New York. The voyage takes five days. The Island is about three-fourths as large as Connecticut. It has 3,606 square miles. On one of the mountains the Atlantic Ocean may be seen toward the north, and the Caribbean Sea on the south.

"The people live very near each other. In the United

States the average number of persons living on each square mile is 20. In the Philippine Islands, it is 60, but in Porto Rico the number is 270. The population is increasing, and sometimes wise men say it will be hard to feed and clothe them, if the number becomes much larger. The people of the Island number about 1,000,000; of these 400,000 are Negroes and mixed races, 100,000 Spaniards, and 500,000 real Porto Ricans.

"Ponce de Leon was the first to explore the Island. He was anxious to find where the gold was. Three hundred soldiers went with him. The Indian chief received Ponce very kindly, gave him a feast, and his daughter in marriage. He also sent guides to show him where the gold was in the bottoms of the rivers. In 1511 Diego Columbus became governor of Porto Rico in place of Ponce. He also was eager to find more gold and was cruel to the natives. Many of these he made work in the mines as slaves. The Spanish government ruled Porto Rico until 1898. It always treated the people in a cruel way. But the Spaniards did one kind act when they freed the slaves in 1873. These numbered 34,000.

"On July 25, 1898, the island became a part of the United States as a result of the war with Spain which made Cuba free.

"The people of the Island were then poor and only about one-fifth of them could read and write. Under their old form of religion, they were ignorant and immoral. The schools were very few and very poor too. A workman then earned only about twenty-five cents a day, but this was not enough to keep his family fed and clothed. Three-fourths of the people lived in poverty, and they ate mostly fruits and vegetables. Sometimes they were able to buy salt codfish and rice.

“The United States government soon built schools. It found but one schoolhouse on the Island. Four years later, in 1902, the new schools had more than 40,000 pupils and the next year 70,000 were in the classes. There are now more than 1,130 schools and 100,000 pupils are being trained in them.

“There are no waste places in Porto Rico. Sugar, coffee, tobacco, bananas, oranges, and other tropical fruits grow anywhere. There are no swamps or rocky fields. The whole Island can be made into a big fruit and vegetable garden.

“The people too will have very rich lives, if we give them the Gospel. They will all grow good crops for Christ. Our missionaries plant the seed of truth that is in the Bible, in their lives.

“The people make Sunday the great day for sports, and we missionaries teach them to go to church and worship God and to serve Him all the week. They like to gamble and many of them drink liquor, but there are no saloons in the Island. The Porto Ricans do not often get intoxicated.

“For four hundred years the Roman Catholic Church was the only one in Porto Rico. The churches were built in the cities and towns, and the people, numbering 800,000, who lived in the country did not have religious services to attend. When the missionaries went to the Island, the common people were very glad to hear the Gospel. They were hungry for the bread of life and thirsty for the water in the well of salvation.

“The people we found were without a religion of love, faith, and hope. Now thousands of the people of Porto Rico know that God loves them and sent His Son to die for them. They have learned also what faith in Christ

as their personal Saviour means. They know they are sinful but they also know that Christ is a wonderful Saviour.

"These people have stopped drinking liquor, learned to work hard, and are generous in their gifts to the missions. Some of the churches have sent money to have the Gospel taken to the people in Haiti and San Domingo, their neighbors on another island.

"The people love to go to church and when they are converted they make strong Christians. There are now many churches all over the Island where the new missionaries preach. They also hold meetings in the streets and talk to the crowds of children and older people.

"We have hospitals to care for the people when they are sick. The missionary doctors and nurses help the people very much. Many of the sick who are taken to the hospitals do not know about God and His Son, but they are treated so kindly that they soon learn to love and serve Him just as their new Christian friends do.

"There are mission schools for girls and others for boys. In some schools they teach young men to become missionaries and how to preach the Gospel so that others will wish to follow the Saviour and do the Will of God.

"I have been a missionary in Porto Rico nine years. I have to go back to the States every two or three years to rest and get away from the heat. I am going back soon to my school of seventy children in the wonderful Island. I am happy to work there, because I have the chance to tell the Gospel story to so many poor people, who know only what I tell them about our Heavenly Father."

IX

MESSAGES FROM ACROSS THE SEA



THE children were very quiet while Miss Henderson was speaking and were sorry when she ended the story.

As they sat there on the wall, their father, who had been out in a boat fishing, shouted: "What do you think of that for a fish?"

Tom replied: "Oh, that is a bouncer!"

Miss Henderson added: "I am very proud to have Tom with me today, Mr. Dodge, because all the boys I have known are very fond of fishing, and Tom has not asked to leave the Mission Band meeting."

"Oh," said Tom, "I am very fond of fishing, too, but I would rather hear about the Porto Rican Missions now, for I can fish any pleasant day."

The father kept on fishing and Miss Henderson said: "I have a surprise for you. The Captain gave me a big envelope from Porto Rico. I promised to give it to you, but I didn't tell him when I would do it."

Then she passed the envelope to Ruth who opened it crying: "Oh, Father, do come in quickly and hear these letters from the children of Porto Rico."

A moment later they saw their father rowing quickly

toward the light and soon he was standing by their side with a big bluefish in his hands weighing more than fifteen pounds. Tom looked at it and said: "That is the biggest one we have ever had, Father, but you couldn't stand it, could you, to try to get a bigger one and lose these wonderful letters?"

The father laughed and joined the company as Miss Henderson took the envelope, saying as she did so: "Why! These are letters from some of the children whom I know; I must read them to you at once, unless the children wish to do so."

Tom and Ruth both said: "Oh, please begin at once, Miss Henderson. We cannot wait a minute longer."

Then their friend read these letters:

Dear Friends:

I was once very sick and my mother was tired. We lived in a poor house and my mother worked hard. We never went to church, because there was no meeting house near our home. We are high up in the mountains and my father works on a big coffee plantation.

One day a stranger who spoke good Spanish, called. His wife was with him, and they were both very good and spoke kindly to me. They were missionaries and told us that God loved us and sent His Son to save us from our sins, and show us how to live right and at last make us ready to go to Heaven.

Father was at home the day they called, and he was not sure that they were good people, but Mother believed at once all they said. We soon found the man was a doctor. He told my parents I could never get well at home, and said I could go to the hospital at San Juan, without any cost.

Then Father knew they were good people and he seemed very happy. I was taken in a long hammock on the shoulders of my father and uncle, for twenty miles.

We reached the wonderful Presbyterian Hospital at San Juan late at night. In three months I was well again. The doctors and nurses were very kind to me. A great many poor sick people come here each year and are made well again. They all learn about Christ also and His Gospel. I now have returned to my home, and next year I hope to study, and when I am old enough, to learn to be a nurse in the same hospital where they were so good to me. My family are all Christians now and members of the church.

I am so glad the missionaries came to Porto Rico. Christ was good to send them, and I am glad they obeyed His will.

Your loving friend,

Dear Lighthouse Friends:

Perhaps we could not tell in this short letter the things which we want to do for Christ in our little Island. We desire to preach His holy Gospel among our countrymen and to go also to foreign nations and tell all of God's love.

We have to proceed humbly just as Moses, Paul, and our Lord did. For this we are getting ready. Every morning we read the Bible and pray. In school and at work we are under certain rules. One of these is: "No student is allowed to use any kind of liquors, cigarettes, and the like." We attend every day the school classes and strive to make good records. By such rules we learn to be honest and able not only to control ourselves, but also to set a good example to others.

The other Latin-American people are needing us to go there to teach them the news which Christ brought. Through His help we will do as much as we can for them. In the same way that Paul, Barnabas, and the other apostles started to foreign nations to preach, we also should go to take the news of salvation that all may turn from their ways of sin. We are sure to do it because the Lord is helping us here in this little Island.

Just as John the Baptist prepared the way for Christ, we hope to prepare the people for His coming in Porto Rico.

Yours truly,

Dear Friends:

My teacher has asked me to write a letter to you telling some things about the cause of Christ in this Island. I am very glad to do it, though I know not very much English to write it correctly.

Two and a half years ago before I came to this school, I knew not Christ but since then I have begun to learn some of His teachings. About four months ago I was received as member of the church of San German.

Here in this Island there are many Christian churches and many people are members of them. These are doing a good work for the people. Our ministers are very kind and good. I like very much to go to Sunday school, for all boys must go so as to learn how to live with God. Whenever I learn a teaching I practice it, because I want to teach others something about Christ. We have a Christian Endeavor Society which has had very good results. We have many other services during the week.

This is one of the most important islands in the world in many respects. We have many cities which are connected by beautiful roads and a good railway system. Here is one of the greatest centrals of the world, that of Guanica. A "central" is our name for sugar factory.

We play games such as tennis, baseball, football, and others. Football is not played very much, on account of the heat. Some of our boys are good players.

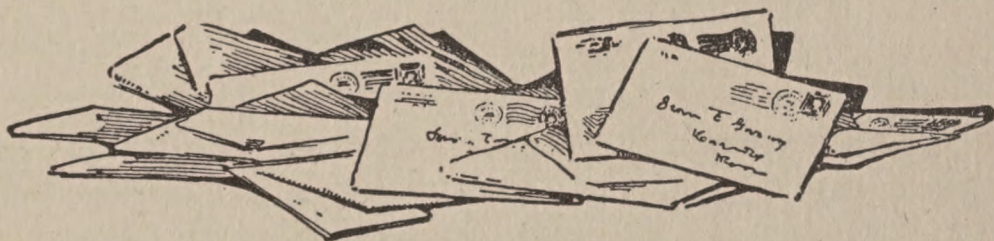
This Institute is the only one of its kind in this Island. Over a hundred boys and girls attend it, and learn how to work with their hands as well as to study. The highest grade is the fourth year of high school. It is doing good for the Island, which is one of the most attractive in the world.

Your friend,

As Miss Henderson laid down the last letter, she looked at the children and said: "Isn't it too bad that this is the last one?"

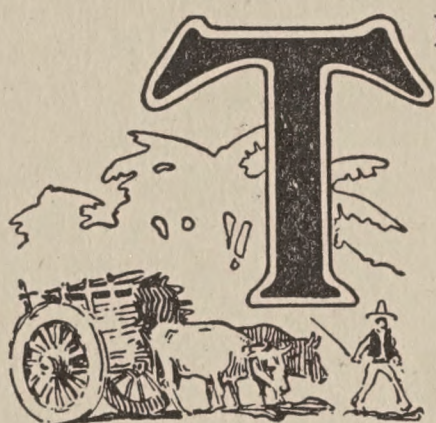
"Yes," said Tom; "I wish there were a hundred more, and perhaps another big envelope full of them will come some other day."

As they were rising to look at a big ship that was passing the lighthouse, Tom said again: "Miss Henderson, haven't you more letters hidden away somewhere?"



X

WHAT MEXICAN CHILDREN SEE



HE friend from Porto Rico appeared not to hear the question, but as she saw that the children were both waiting for an answer, she said: "Yes, I must tell you that I have one more big envelope, that has a postmark 'Mexico City.'"

The children danced for joy and the mother said: "We will all go into the house now, and this evening after supper we will hear the letters from the children of Mexico."

When the dishes were cleared away and washed and wiped by the children, Paul was put to bed and the rest of the family and their visitor soon were hearing these letters from the Mexican children:

My dear Friends:

My teacher here at Puebla has told me that I can write this letter to you. I am eleven years and eight months old. My father and mother are Christians, and I have seven brothers and sisters. I have two dogs, which are very faithful pets. One of them is white and the other is black, but I am glad to tell you we also have thirty chickens, and a cow, which I like very much. She gives us plenty of milk every day, but her little calf don't know anything yet except to eat. I wish I had a pony which I could ride.

We have a good school here, and I am in the sixth year. My teachers scold me when I do not study hard, but I deserve it. They also are telling me every day that I must not smoke or drink intoxicating liquors. The games I like best are baseball, tug-of-war, leap frog, and tin base. In the story of our country, I like best that chapter about the bravery of Cuauhtemoc, whom the Spaniards tormented. Also the defense of Chapultepec by the students of a military academy.

I always go to church every Sunday because there I learn how to grow to be a good man. Sometimes I have felt strong desires to follow Christ, but I am ashamed to tell you that I am timid, and when my friends ask me, "Do you go with the Protestants?" I sometimes feel tempted to deny Christ. But I hope to overcome this soon.

Your affectionate friend and servant,

My dear Friends:

I want to write this letter and tell you my thoughts. I am twelve years old, and the youngest in the family. I am glad to tell you that we are Christians at our house, and my mamma has always sent me to this school, so that while studying my lessons I would also learn about the Gospel and how to follow Jesus.

I have three brothers and one sister. We have a little tiny dog in our house; his color is white, and we call him "Vivi." We also have a little kitten that we call "Juguete" (toy), and a number of chickens of all kinds. We did have a cow, but had to sell her because of the war, as we had no hay or grain to feed her. We also had some pet goats, but we ate them all up.

I am in the Mission school and I study in the fifth year. There are nine other girls in my class. The name of the girl who sits with me at my desk is Ester Martinez. I like to study Geography and Arithmetic and I could study them all day if they would let me. The game I like best is one we have here called "Al Car La Pelota" (a

form of hand-ball). Every Sunday I go to Sunday school because I love to study the Bible.

In the story of our country, I like best to read about the "Torment of Cuauhtemoc." He was a brave and active Indian, whom the Spaniards tormented by burning his feet, trying to make him tell where the treasures of Montezuma were hidden, but he would not tell them, and suffered to the last in silence. I want to follow Christ, and be a Christian, and become a member of this church. These are my thoughts and desires that I wanted to tell you about.

Your attentive servant,

My dear Friends:

I am eleven years old, and I am glad to tell you that my parents are both living. I have five brothers and sisters, and I also own a dog "Bull Terry." He is not very pretty, but he knows a lot. I go to a Christian school, and my teachers are very good to me. We have Bible reading and prayer every morning before we begin our classes. I like to play baseball better than any other game.

In the "Story of our Country," I like to read of the little boy Mendoza, who stood in the trenches alone in the war of independence. When all the men were dead he continued to fire the cannon, causing the enemy to flee, and so winning the victory. I like to go to church, and I am glad to tell you that I don't have to go into the basement any more, as I am big enough to be in one of the classes upstairs. I want to be a Christian and follow Christ, and I believe God will help me to do so.

Your true friend,

My dear Friends:

I am twelve years old, and I live with my father and mother, brothers and sisters. They love me very much, and I am happy to have such a good home. I am afraid I can never pay back to my parents what I owe them for

their kindness to me. But I will love them all my life, and maybe that will help.

I pray every day and ask God to let my parents and my brothers and sisters live a long time. I have two doves, one white, and the other gray, also a cat which we call "Diamond." In our school we have a little service of singing, prayer, and Bible reading every morning. Our teacher has been reading to us about Jonah going to Nineveh, and also about Jesus curing the paralytic and raising Lazarus from the dead. The classes I like best in school, are reading, drawing, history, and the Bible. I also like to go to Sunday school, because there I learn how I must live and do in order to be a good woman when I grow up.

I like to hear the prayers offered in our Sunday school, and also the verses which we have to repeat from memory every Sunday. But do you know, what had made me think the most was a prayer offered last Sunday in our Sunday school by a little boy six or seven years old. He prayed out loud, and asked God to save his mamma who was very sick. In the "Story of Mexico," I like best the chapter that tells about Nicholas Bravo, who pardoned the three hundred prisoners guilty of taking part in the plot which resulted in the death of Bravo's father. They thought they were all to be shot, and Nicholas Bravo made a speech to them and said, "Men, I will take vengeance upon you now, and you are all forgiven, and may now go free."

I am not very fond of games, and I like best to read and study, instead of play. But I do like to go out in the country, where the air is pure and free. I have had many wishes to follow Christ and obey Him, but I have not been able to do it yet, because so many of my friends make fun of me because I go with the Protestants. I hope that with God's help I will overcome all these troubles, and I will follow Jesus, and if I can, will bring many others to walk in His path.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

My dear Friends:

I am very glad to write a letter to my friends in the United States. I am twelve years old. I have some big brothers who are at work, but I also have some work to do in our home, for we are poor and all of us have to work very hard. I have to carry water, feed the chickens, water and sweep the street, and do all this after my study hours in school. I have one dog of which I am very fond. I wish I also had a pony. We have a little canary at our house, and I can count seven different colors on its body.

Our schoolhouse is very small, but we have many children in it. I like best to study arithmetic, reading and writing. We have good times at recess, playing ball and tin base. In Sunday school, the stories I like best are those that tell about Jesus, when He fed five thousand people with only five loaves of bread and two little fishes. I like also the stories about His raising Lazarus and the daughter of Jairus from the dead. In the story of my country, I love to read about the "Siege of Cuautla," and the "Imprisonment of Morelos" and the heroic way in which he died. I am very anxious to learn more about the Bible, and I would like also to know how to pray and follow the commandments of Jesus.

I always go to church when I can, but I have not joined it yet.

Your faithful friend,

My dear Friends:

A few days ago I was sick and could not write then, but thanks to the care of my good Christian mother, I am now well again, and can go to school every day. I want to finish the grades and then study to be a missionary. I go to church and Sunday school every Sunday, and last Sunday my teacher gave me a New Testament as a reward for faithful attendance and punctuality.

I like best to play with my dolls, and whenever I have any time, I make dresses for them. My little sister and

other girl friends come and play with me, sometimes. The pets I like best are pigeons and chickens. I will be eleven years old next February, and my parents have promised to have a little party on that day, when we are going to make some *tamales* and *enchiladas*, two Mexican dishes of which all are very fond. We are to invite a number of my little girl friends to my house for that day. I am sorry to tell you that here in Mexico we are having a war. Many times we haven't any corn and we have no candy at all. I hope to grow up and then I will be a member of the Christian Church in this place.

I am glad to call myself,

Your friend.

My dear Friends:

My papa is a colporteur, and he has taught me a great many good things. Sometimes I go with him on his trips, but on account of the war, I have not been able to go with him this year. I am now going to school every day, better than I used to do. Every Sunday I go to Sunday school. I love best to play marbles and spin my top.

I used to have a little dog and some chickens, but I haven't any now. I traded my dog for two roosters, and since we ate the roosters I have nothing left. I will be eleven years old in October. We are very sorry that we have a war here in Mexico, and only God knows why it continues. My papa is always telling me about my duties in being a Christian, and I expect soon to join the church.

Your faithful friend,

"I am very sorry for those roosters," said Ruth. "I hope we shall have another letter from that boy and a lot more from the Mexican children."

The children were not sleepy, but it was time to go to bed, and at once they said "Good night," and were

soon dreaming of the children of Mexico and Porto Rico. An hour after that the moon was just coming up out of the ocean, when the lighthouse keeper and his wife led Miss Henderson to her little room, whose windows opened toward the east and the beautiful island which she loved so much.



XI

MOUNTAIN AND VALLEY CHILDREN



MISS HENDERSON'S visit passed very quickly, and two weeks after the day she came, the supply ship made its next call at the lighthouse. It was a perfect day and the ocean was very smooth and blue. It was hard for Tom and Ruth to say good-bye to the missionary from Porto Rico, who had told them so many stories and had read to them so many wonderful letters.

A very strange thing happened when the little steamship was leaving the light. Bobby, who had followed his new friend on to the boat, had chased a rat down a stairway, and was not discovered till a hundred feet of water stretched between the departing ship and the wall. When he saw that he was being carried away, he gave one loud bark and leaped into the sea and swam around the wall and came up to the little wharf again near the playground.

This made a great excitement, but in a moment Bobby was on the wall once more barking and running around, while the lighthouse children and their mother and father were still waving good-bye to Miss Henderson.

That afternoon it was decided not to wait a week until the regular time for the next meeting of the Mission

Band, but to read at once the letters that came that day in the boat from the children in the valleys and on the mountains.

Their father was with them also, and sat with little Paul in his arms while Tom and Ruth listened to their mother as she read to them all. Before beginning the first letter, she said:



“The people of Mexico very much need to have the truth of God, which only the missionaries can take to them by their lips and by their lives. The Mexicans, or nearly all of them, are very ignorant. In the civil war in recent years several of these missionaries have died as martyrs for their faith in Christ. But in spite of the war the mission work has gone forward fast and many new converts have been won for Christ. During the war

nearly all the American missionaries had to leave the country and return to their homes in the United States. The native pastors worked all alone, but the Lord was with them and the number of the disciples of Christ grew.

"Many of the Mexicans have left Mexico and are now living in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Texas, California, and other states. Some Mexicans have always lived in the United States, in those parts of the country which were in Mexico before they became states or territories in our country.

"From the children living here and there in the southwestern part of our nation, I have some letters to read you. They are very interesting ones. I will take them in the order in which they come out of the envelope, and I will let Ruth reach in and draw one after the other out. It will be a kind of a prize bag."

The first letter that Ruth found in her hand read this way:

Dear Ocean Friends:

My home is in El Paso, Texas. I live near the Rose Gregory Houchen Settlement. I used to live a long way off from here, but my father obtained work in El Paso, and so we came to this place.

We have a large family, and my mother soon became very sick. We were too poor to have a doctor, but my mother needed one very much. One day father lost his work, and within a week our food was all gone. Then one of my little sisters was also sick. When we didn't know what to do, a wonderful thing happened.

That day a very kind woman came to our house, and asked to see my mother. She spoke Spanish beautifully, and her voice was very soft and tender. When I went to the door, I burst into tears, and told her my mother was very sick and little Mary was also. At once she came in

and saw how poor and needy we were. After making my mother comfortable, as much as she could, she hurried away for a doctor. That afternoon she returned with another missionary, and both of them cleaned up our house. They brought food and medicine, and in a few days mother and Mary were well again. What do you think they found had made my mother sick? It was impure water.

We go to the Settlement House every day now, and are learning everything that children need to know, and best of all, we have been taught to pray and to read the Bible. Our new friends soon found Father a place to work, and all was at once changed in our home.

The missionaries taught my mother to cook and to sew on a machine that Father has bought. I now can sew, cook, mend stockings, make hats and dress, braid mats, and weave a hammock. I can make baskets too.

Mother says that our life is all changed now. Last night at supper, Father said that the Settlement has settled all our troubles and made our home over into a new happy one. If you ever come to El Paso, be sure and go to the Settlement, and see the missionaries and the children there.

Lovingly your friend,

Dear Far-away Friends:

Did you ever hear about our wonderful Harwood Industrial School at Albuquerque, New Mexico? I am glad I did, because it has made me into a new girl. Let me tell you what we do in one day. After breakfast the little girls wash the dishes, brush the floors, and set the tables for the next meal. Some of the older girls scrub the floors of the bed-rooms, and all the girls make their own beds.

Each girl has her own bag in the sewing room. It is not made of silk, but cotton. She has her own chair, too, and on this her mending is piled. If the girls are too little to mend, the older girls do it for them. All of us wear

brown serge uniforms, and these are all made in school.

Before we go to church Sunday morning, we stand in line, and the teachers look very carefully to see if every dress and hat are right, and if our hands and faces are clean. Of course each girl has her hair combed just as the teacher has told her to do it. Our tam-o'-shanters match our dresses. We wear red ties and hair ribbons too.

Our Bible study class is a fine one. My father and mother live in a little adobe house near a large, high mountain. I am going home next summer to work hard helping Mother. I am also to teach in our little Sunday school near the mountain, and will try to teach the boys and girls how to love and follow the Lord who died for us all.

My father is very poor, but works hard. One of my older brothers helps to pay my expenses at this school, and some good Christian woman, whom I have never seen, and whose name I don't even know, sends the rest of the money. If it were not for that good woman, I could not be in the school learning to be a teacher. I hope to grow up to be a missionary myself. My health is good, and I can run very fast. One day I ran four miles on an errand for my father, and my mother said I was back home almost before she thought I could have reached the place she sent me to.

I hope you can come some time and see our school and meet our teachers. I know three friends who live in my village, and they are praying every day that God will put it into the hearts of some one to send some money so that they can come to our wonderful Christian school.

Your true friend,

Dear Far Away Friends:

Have you ever seen a mountain? I live on the side of one. I can look a long way. Across the wide valley I can see other mountains that always have snow on them. My father and mother are Mexicans, but they all love the

United States. I see an eagle now. My father votes for the President.

The mission school has made a new boy of me, my mother and father say. The teachers have often told me about the Lord. I have read many times the story of Jesus and how He died to save all the people that lived when He was on the earth, also those who have lived since and who will live on the earth as long as it turns round.

What I am going to be when I am a big man, I don't know, but I am sure I shall be a Christian and serve God as long as I live. Then I am sure I shall go to Heaven when I die.

Mother says she can't thank the Lord enough for what the mission school has done for her children. I am the middle one and I am a boy.

Yours truly,

Dear Ocean Kids:

In Colorado there are many Mexican people and I am one of them. I speak Spanish, but I like English better than Spanish. I can read and write both languages. My mother and father cannot read or write. They are very poor and work very hard. The mission school is near my house, so I go every day. Many of my brothers and sisters go. The teacher is good to my mother. My parents and my sister are now members of the church near the mission school. I am a member too.

Father used to swear and drink whisky. Now he does not swear or get mad and he drinks only water and milk. God made him into a new man, when He forgave his sins. He now has much hard work to do, but we are all happy. I expect to own a big ranch when I grow to be a man.

Yours with love,

Dear Friends:

I live in Colorado in a canyon. Some eagles live in the rocks near the top of the mountain. One day one of

them came down near our house and stole a lamb and carried it up to his home. My father shot at the eagle many times, but it didn't stop flying.

When I was eight years old I could not read. Then a new family came to live near our home. They were Mexicans too. There were two children about as old as myself. Their father worked with my father on the railroad track. Their mother could read, because she once went to a Christian school. The missionaries told her the stories in the Bible. Soon she had all the children in the canyon in a Sunday school. We had this school in her house. In a little while I learned to spell and soon I could read the Bible.

I am going to a mission school now. My father gets more pay this year. He says I must learn all I can and grow up to be a good Christian. I have a pony. His name is Jacko. Last Saturday he threw me over his head when we met a rattlesnake by the side of the path. Father says it is a wonder I was not bitten by the snake. I picked myself up, and I killed that snake and dragged it home by the tail. Jacko ran home and my mother was afraid I was killed. She cried for joy when she saw me coming up the canyon path.

The skin of the snake was fastened outside our door. Yesterday the train stopped in front of our house. Something in the engine broke. A man in the train saw the snakeskin and gave my mother five dollars for it.

I love to read the Bible. I read it every day to Mother and Father.

Your loving friend,

Dear Brother and Sister:

My home is in an orange grove in California. My father was born near the Rio Grande river in Mexico. We moved to our new home because my father could get work. He works in the grove. At first I liked oranges, but I ate so many that I do not like them so well now.

Near our home a woman with a pleasant face opened a

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Mission. It was in a room over a store. My mother and I went. I love to print the Golden Texts of the Sunday school lessons. I go to the public school. Father is very proud that I can read. Mother cannot read and she says she is too old to learn now.

We have joined the church in our town. I am growing very fast and I want to grow just as fast as a Christian too.

Your friend,

Dear Sea Children:

My father works in a mine in Arizona. He is a Mexican, but I am an American. My mother says she wants me to be a missionary to my people. There is a mission school near my house and I go there every day. The teachers are good to me and I study hard. Every week I learn many verses in the Bible. My father did not want me to go to this school. He was afraid I would learn wrong things about God. Now he is glad. He says I am a better boy since I learned to pray and read the Bible and follow Christ.

Your friend,

Dear Friends:

In the camp near our old shack, my father is a cook. I had a dear mother, but she was often sick. My father gets good pay, but often he spent it in buying whisky. A Sky Pilot sometimes comes to our camp and talks to the men about the Bible. He tells us all to love Christ and to ask God to forgive my sins. He is very kind to me. When my mother died, he took me to a mission school. My father sends the money each month to pay the tuition and board. The men in the camp also call me their little girl and send me money so my teachers can buy me shoes and warm gloves and dresses and books.

Many of these men have become good Christians. The Sky Pilot wrote me last week, that my father had be-

come a Christian too and he is teaching him to read the Bible.

In the camp a Chinaman helps my father cook and a Japanese drives one of the teams. They also send me presents. The Sky Pilot writes that both of these men now pray each day and he hopes the Chinaman will go back to China and be a missionary in his own country. He doesn't smoke opium any more. The Japanese man is reading his Bible every day and is becoming a good man.

Yours with love,

XII

THE REAL LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS



EAR the end of May, a great storm was raging on the ocean and the waves ran very high. The spray broke over the walls and Tom and Ruth could not go out of the house for several days.

One Thursday morning, their father was taken very ill; soon he had a fever and was so weak that he had to go to bed. His pain was very great, and during that night he suffered so much that he could hardly speak. The next morning the children's mother was also taken very sick and little Paul had the croup. Their mother was too weak to lift her head from the pillow, but told Tom and Ruth what medicines to give and said she believed that they would all be well again soon.

Tom became the lighthouse keeper and Ruth was the little mother of the family. She hurried around from room to room, cooked the food, kept fresh drinking water by the beds, and sang as she worked. The next afternoon, their father had less pain and was able to walk about the house slowly, by leaning on a cane. A little after that, however, his pain returned and for three days he was not able to take his head from his pillow.

The mother said: "Dear children, there is a very bright side to our trouble, because you are both well, and

we have the medicine we need to make your father and Paul and your mother well again. God is always with us too."

Tom was very careful to keep the big light burning brightly and was up in the lighthouse until ten o'clock each evening. The storm was severe and a whole week passed before the sea began to be quiet again. After the wind stopped blowing, the waves continued to run so high they broke in fury against the lighthouse wall. The danger signals in the harbors must have been given to the sailors, for not a single ship came within sight of the lighthouse for eight days.

On the ninth morning, the parents were still very sick, but little Paul was going about again balancing himself between the chairs, as he was just learning to walk. When the sea grew calm, Tom's father asked him to hoist as a signal of distress, a very large red flag. This was run up to the head of the little mast above the light at two o'clock in the afternoon, but no ship saw the signal, as the two ships that passed that afternoon were at a great distance from the light. The mother was very sick still, but her husband made a second attempt, by leaning on his cane, to wait upon her. Tom and Ruth did all they could and their mother and father many times told them how proud they were that they had such brave and good children.

The supply ship was not expected to come until three days more had passed. The next morning after the sea was calm, at daylight several ships were within sight of the lighthouse, although far away on the horizon. The children were very anxious, for their father was not able to rise from the bed, and their mother was so sick that she could not answer when they spoke to her.

Each day in the early morning the children had sung and read a chapter in the Bible in the bedroom where their parents were sick, and their father had prayed that God would send some one to help them, when the storm should pass. Many times a day, Bobby put his nose on his master's bed and seemed to say: "I wish I could help too, but I am only a dog."

About ten o'clock, Ruth looked out of the window toward the shore, which she could not see of course, and thought of Uncle Rufus and Aunt Clara who would gladly come to help them if they knew of the trouble at the light. Suddenly she heard Tom shout from the room above: "A big war-ship is coming toward the lighthouse. The telescope lets me see it very clearly."

Then he hurried down to the room where his father and mother were sick and Ruth said, as the tears came to her eyes: "God has heard our prayer and answered it, and before it gets dark we will know who our helper is."

During the next hour the children gazed at the approaching ship and often reported its progress. Soon a flag was run up from the front mast and their father said: "We are safe now, children. The Captain is answering our signal of distress."

Soon the big friend stopped about a mile away and blew a long whistle. Then almost before the children could see what was happening, a launch came hurrying toward the lighthouse. In a few minutes it was at the wall and men were climbing up the ladder and running toward the house. One of them had a bag in his hand and the man behind him carried a big basket. It had begun to rain again and the children could not see the faces of the sailors. When Ruth and Tom ran down to open the door, they gave a great shout of joy and both

of them burst into tears, because there before them stood dear Uncle Jack, with the ship's doctor and a nurse and four other men with baskets of food.

Uncle Jack soon heard the story while the doctor and nurse cared for the sick. The father and mother were overcome with joy and praise to God for sending their dear friend to help them in their trouble. When the children had finished the exciting story of the long storm and the sickness of their parents, Uncle Jack lifted Tom and Ruth both up into his great strong arms, kissed them again and again and said: "Bravo, my children. Richard and Clarissa couldn't have done better if they had been here."

The next instant, Tom and Ruth found themselves on the floor hardly knowing whether they were laughing or crying, when Uncle Jack lifted them up and dropped them there. Then they followed him as he ran up into the light room and signaled to his first officer to send a wireless message to the shore to have a doctor and a nurse come at once to the lighthouse.

An hour later, all was quiet, and the father and mother were sleeping peacefully with the nurse sitting by their beds. After eating a supper prepared by the cook, who was sent for by the Captain, Tom and Ruth were told that they must go to sleep at once and forget all about everything.

Uncle Jack put an officer in charge of the light and returned to the war-ship to spend the night. The next morning very early a swift government boat raced from the harbor many miles away with a doctor and a nurse and a fresh supply of medicines. For two days after that the war-ship stayed near the lighthouse, while Uncle Jack remained with his sick friends all day. During this

time, Ruth and Tom were on board and had a good time playing again with Tiger, and talking with the officers and sailors.

When the sick father and mother became stronger and began to sit up a little, the supply ship came and then Uncle Jack said good-by. When he went away he promised to visit them again during the month of August and stay if possible a whole day, when Clarissa and Richard were at the light. After the Captain had gone, the doctor from the shore remained three days longer and the nurse stayed a whole month before the children's parents were able to be left again. The captain of the supply ship had also left a man to remain two weeks to care for the light. Then Mr. Dodge, the lighthouse keeper, with Tom's help, was able to look after the light until the supply ship came the next time.

A month later, Uncle Jack surprised them again, because he could not come in August as he had promised, as he would then be a thousand miles away in South American waters. On this last visit to the lighthouse, the children read to him all the letters that had come from the mission children. It took them a long time to do this, but Uncle Jack wanted to hear every one of them. After the last letter was finished, they all went out to the end of the wall and their dear friend told them many exciting stories about Cuba and Porto Rico and Mexico and described the boys and girls whom he had met there. He also had much to say about the Philippine Islands, China, Japan, and India and certain places in Africa where his war-ship had been. In these countries too, he had visited many of the missions, had talked with the missionaries, and had heard the children sing and repeat verses from the Bible.

Tom and Ruth will always remember what Uncle Jack said that day and the little talk he had with each of them about living a true Christian life, about praying and reading the Bible every day and trying in every way to please the Saviour. That evening they had to say good-by once more to the captain of the war-ship, who told them when he went away that in August, Richard and Clarissa could stay a full month at the lighthouse.

The next morning Ruth wrote in her diary, "Uncle Jack said, 'The Christians in the United States have the Bible and they must send it to the people in Cuba, Porto Rico, and Mexico. They must also give the Bible to all those who come from foreign countries and who do not know about God's love or have forgotten to love and serve Him. The Bible is God's love letter to the whole world, and the salvation Christ gives to all who trust Him and obey their Heavenly Father, is not for a few good people, but for all people. It is given to them whether they are good or bad, and when the bad people obey God they become good, then they at once learn how to do good unto all others, even to their enemies, if they have any. Christ wishes His salvation to be received by black men, yellow men, red men, brown men, white men, and gray men, if any people are gray. Missionary work is giving the Gospel to every one. It is a big thing to try to do all this, but if a good many people try hard, the whole world will soon learn about Christ, and receive His salvation. Schools, hospitals, and churches must be built where they are needed and teachers, doctors, nurses, and missionaries must go and help in all the places where the people do not know about God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

" 'Children can help in all this work by giving and

praying and reading about Missions. When the children grow up and become men and women, many of them ought to go and tell the people in the dark corners of the earth about the Saviour and His love for everybody.' ”

When Ruth had finished writing these lines she read them to Tom who said: “ Please let me add a few lines.”

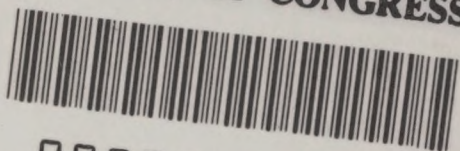
Just then Ruth ran to the house to help her mother who called to her, and a little while later returned with Paul in her arms and set him down in front of her older brother. As she did this, Tom said: “ Ruth, just listen to what I have written in the diary. ‘ The best letters we have ever had have come from the mission children. We have added all these boys and girls who have sent us these letters to our Mission Band. We call them the “ Absent Members.” We have more than fifty members now in our Band, and the names of all of them are in our book. We have bound the letters up into a big book with stiff covers and we are always going to keep it.

“ ‘ If Mother and Father are willing and we can save up enough money, perhaps Ruth and I can have our letters printed and sent around so that the boys and girls on the land will see how interesting they are.’ ”

Just then their mother called: “ Children, have you forgotten those four big envelopes from Cuba, Porto Rico, Chicago, and Los Angeles, that came yesterday on the supply ship? ”

So many things had happened that it was not strange that some things had been forgotten, while Uncle Jack was there. In a few minutes they were reading the new letters, but these cannot be repeated here.

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